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**DEVELOPING A SPORT EVENT- SHOULD VUOKATTI HIIHTO JOIN IN
THE EUROLOPPET?**

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<p>Every product has a lifecycle and it is important for tourism providers to review their products every now and then so as to determine the current stage and its implications. Tourism products just like any other product age with time and therefore call for product development to keep them profitable and competitive in the market environment. This study was initiated following the need to attract new market for a skiing marathon event, Vuokatti Hiihto. The purpose was to derive a profile of a skier in the target market and his or her interest in participation.</p> <p>The study introduces sport tourism with emphasis on sport event tourism based on related literature. Theoretical framework of the study is based on product development with more focus on relocating a product to attract new markets. Furthermore, description of the case study is provided along with statistics of skiing in Finland based on secondary material. A survey was conducted resulting to primary data which was analysed using quantitatively.</p> <p>The study discovered that more than half of the survey's respondents were willing to participate in Vuokatti Hiihto in the future with 56.5%) of potential customers being Germans. In addition, the skiers' preferred lengths and skiing styles already existed in Vuokatti Hiihto. The product would be repositioned to suit the interests of potential market and proper marketing efforts implemented. In conclusion, it was recommended that Vuokatti Hiihto should join the Euroloppet.</p>	
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PREFACE

This thesis was concluded in spring 2012 in accordance to the fulfilment of a Bachelor Degree in Hospitality Management at Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. This is the work of the sole author; Johnson Ngunju, with the support of academic literature and professional supervision.

My warm regards goes to my friends and classmates; Ute Matzner, Cheng Zeng, Olga Rogulskaya, Mari Holmström, Andrew Opare, Tiia Soininen, Charles Nze and Linda Malchow who have been supportive during the course of my studies. Furthermore I would like to thank all the African fraternity, especially Akoko Eric, Steve Kerosi and Mikael Igendia for their continued brotherhood.

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Much thanks to Kainuun Liikunta, the commissioning party in this thesis and especially Teemu Takalo, for cooperation and support during my thesis. Furthermore, I would like to thank my mum, Florence Ngunju and my sister Priscilla Ngunju for continued moral support despite the distance. Lastly, my special thanks goes to Korhonen's family; Jaana, Arttu, Helmi and Sisko for their unconditional love and support.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Every product has a lifecycle and it is important for tourism providers to review their products every now and then so as to determine the current stage and its implications. Tourism products just like any other product age with time and therefore call for product development to keep them profitable and competitive in the market environment. In the current wake of health fitness awareness, many people are interested in participating in sport events which in turn has seen event developers burning the midnight oil in quest of creating attractive and rewarding events. Since sport events such as cross-country skiing might be similar in nature, it poses a lot of challenges to the event organizers. Therefore specific features that create uniqueness and value are supposed to be added in order to differentiate a particular product from the competitors.

This thesis is commissioned by Kainuun Liikunta, an association of sport development and health awareness in Kainuu with the purpose of obtaining feasible information that can be relied upon in quest for product development of a ski event; Vuokatti hiihto. The research focuses on the target consumers with the aim of achieving customer profile definition and interest. The findings are anticipated to give a sound decision on the intended action; joining or not joining the Euroloppet, a ski marathon association based in Germany. The forecasted partnership would pave way for the event publicity within Europe, additional participation of foreign skiers to Vuokatti Hiihto and possible repeat customers from the target region. In addition, the findings are a crucial tool for Kainuun Liikunta's development plans especially in pursuit of project's funding from the local government.

Chapter one focuses on definitions of sports tourism, tourism, and sport. Sport tourism categories are also discussed. This is in relation to the growing awareness on leisure, recreation and sport tourism. In chapter two, sport event tourism is discussed. More attention is directed at the elements of sport events and sport events as tourist attractions. Impacts of sport events are also discussed.

The third chapter tackles the process of developing an existing product with positioning and product lifecycle applied. This is contrary to the process of developing a new product since the case in this thesis is an existing product. The fourth chapter discusses the case study, Vuokatti Hiihto and the Euroloppet. More attention is directed to the history of skiing and

skiing in Finland with statistics given. Chapter five introduces the research methodology, explaining the objectives and research method used. Subsequently, chapter six will discuss the results and analysis while chapter seven discusses the analysis of the results of the study. Chapter eight delivers the discussions, conclusion and recommendations based on the result analysis.

2 SPORTS TOURISM

Despite natural calamities, economic hardships, terrorist activities and political waves, tourism industry has demonstrated the ability of resistance and tolerance through its contribution to the world gross domestic product, turnover and employment. It is regarded as a major contribution of economy especially in the developing countries with figures as high as 45% of total services exports, and a key export in over 80% of the developing countries. (UNWTO 2010).

2.1 Definitions

According to the World Tourism Organization (2010), tourism industry is among the world's top job generators and a major export sector particularly in the third- world countries where it accounts for 45% of export services. It is considered to great degree as a viable and sustainable economic activity. Tourism consists of activities, services and industries that provide a travel experience for those travelling away from their places of normal residence. A definition accepted by the World Tourism Organization states that tourism involves all activities of travelling and staying outside usual environment for a period not exceeding one year, with the purpose of leisure or other business. (Ritchie et al. 2006, 7).

The term sport can be defined from a range of perspectives including competitiveness, time, space and formalized rules while other consider noncompetitive elements such as recreation and health. (Hudson 2003, 2). A comprehensive definition states that sport is “the whole range of competitive and non-competitive active pursuits that involve skill, strategy, and/or chance in which human beings engage, at their own level, simply for enjoyment and training or to raise their performance to levels of publicly acclaimed excellence”. (Standeven & De Knop 1999, 12).

Sport tourism involves travelling to watch or participate in sporting activities with the main reason being travelling or sport hence it is defined as “all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organized way for non-

commercial or commercial reasons, that necessitate travel away from home and work locality". (Standeven & De Knop 1999, 12).

2.2 Sport Tourism Categories

There are four categories of Sport tourism namely; attractions, resorts, cruises and events. Tourism attractions are described as the destinations that offer venues and activities for the tourists. They are either natural for instance, mountains, parks and wildlife or man-made for example museums, stores and stadiums. The common areas that draw tourists include modern facilities like stadiums, sport museums and halls of fame, theme parks, hiking trails and sport retail stores. These museums and halls of fame have recorded annual visitation of over 300,000 tourists in America and Asia. Another category is the resorts whose major focus is sports or health. Resorts are usually equipped with modern facilities for different levels of activity alongside educational programs provided by trained personnel. Sport tourism resorts are categorized into amenity and destination spas, golf and tennis resorts, water and snow sport resorts and nature retreats which emphasize on outdoor activities. Related to sport resorts are sport camps which take venue at resorts, universities and wilderness. They vary in nature and degree of the sport activities; they are also day or residential. (Hudson 2003, 3-6).

Cruises are also categorized as sports tourism, and in particular those that offer sport facilities and activities, with sports as their main marketing strategy. They may be hosting sporting personalities or transporting participants to tourism related sports and venues. From the same categorization, organized and self-guided sport tours offer opportunities to guests for visiting their favorite sport event, destination or facility. Events contribute largely to sport tourism. Mega events such as the Olympic Games and World Cup are renown by drawing huge crowds from the diverse parts of the globe. (Hudson 2003, 7-9). An addition to categories provided above by Hudson, Ritchie et al. (2004, 8-13) classify sport tourism from a marketing perspective thus giving only three categories which include active sports tourism, event sport tourism and nostalgia sports tourism. To start with, active sports tourism are considered to be those that involve active participation for instance climbing, hiking, winter sports, biking, golf and adventure tourism. On the other hand, nostalgia sport tourism focuses on avenues and artifacts that remind tourists of a particular recognized event or per-

sonality in history. They include sports halls of fame, sports museums and sport tours. It is noted that the influence driving those fanatics is still yet to be clear. The third category is the event sport tourism which involves small scale events, hallmark and mega sporting events. More emphasis is given to large scale events (mega and hallmark) in scholarly research.

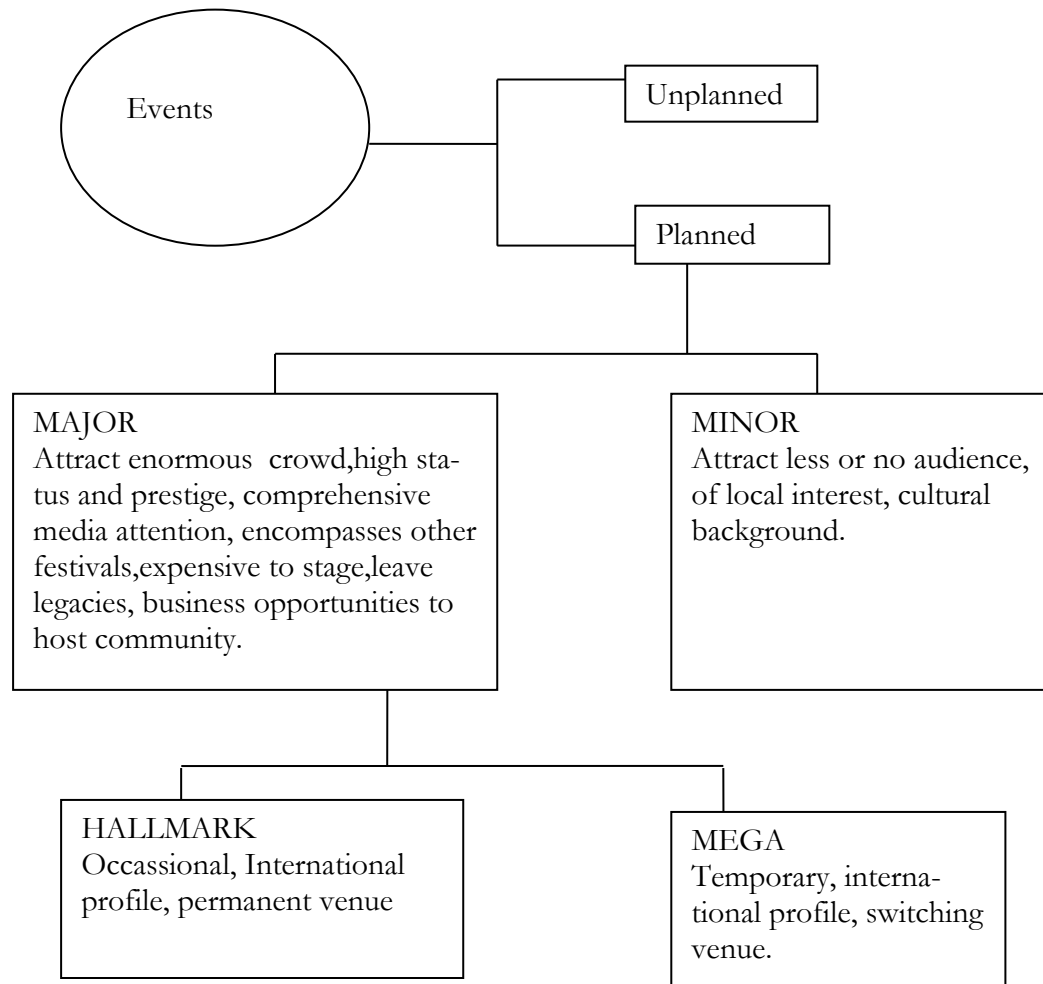
3 SPORT EVENT TOURISM

3.1 Definition

According to Hudson (2003, 56), sport event tourism is travelling with a purpose of participating in or viewing a sport event, which is motivated by the reputation, scope of an event or the presence of great personalities. An event is defined as a unique happening which is temporary, planned or unplanned, with a fixed length. Definition of event categories differs within various literatures with contradicting meanings given on mega, major and hallmark events. However, the three terminologies are inter-related considering the size and scale of each event. Events fall into two categories of planned and unplanned. Consequently the planned events can be split into major and minor with major events further sub-divided into hallmark and mega events. Major event are presented as of high status and prestige, having the ability to attract large number of audience and expansive media attention. They also integrate other types of events and festivals, are expensive to hold, provide for business opportunities and bring about legacies. Minor events are small in size, attract less audience and are locally held with traits of a cultural tradition. Hallmark events are occasional with international profile, and are held in a permanent venue. On the other hand, mega events are short-lived, have an international profile and held on different venues.

Sport events are considered important in the development of the society. From an economic perspective, the host community enjoys the infrastructural development, employment and incoming revenues from the events' venues. Sports development is to great extent influenced by sport events from local to international levels. It is argued that the amount of people watching a sport event influences future participation figures. Currently, technology has played a significant role in enhancing the quality and efficiency of sport events. This can be witnessed on various equipment and facilities that enable much accuracy and publicity for example; digital timing, replay on huge plasma screens, internet ticket vending and improved televising devices among others. (Masterman, 2009, 6-9). The model below illustrates the breakdown of events' definition.

Figure 1. Definition of Events. (Masterman 2009,13). Adapted from Jago & Shaw (1998).



3.2 Sport Events as Tourist Attractions

Hinch & Higham (2004, 24) defines tourist attraction as a system embracing three elements namely: a tourist or human element, a nucleus or central element, and a marker or informative element. The human element encompasses people travelling away from home with prime motivation being leisure-related. The nucleus refers to the site of production and consumption of tourist experience. In sports perspective, the sport activity provides the nucleus or the central element of an attraction. The marker or the informative element acts as a connection between a tourist and each nuclear element. They include sources and channels of information regarding nucleus elements of an attraction. Advertisements of sport events

or activities and televised broadcast of events from a venue convey the event and the venue as a tourist attraction to listeners and viewers. Given the spectator multitudes pulled by sport events, and their unique nature of rules, time and playfulness coupled with wide media coverage, sport events are validated tourist attractions.

Attractions can either be primary or secondary or tertiary. The traveler's decision on primary attraction is exclusively driven by the attraction itself while secondary attractions are known earlier before the visit and are not necessarily considered a priority in travel plans. On the other hand, tertiary attractions are unknown to the traveler beforehand although they provide entertainment or activities at the destination.

3.3 Impacts of Sport Events

Sport events have both negative and positive impacts which are also short-term and long term. Either of the impacts relies on event planning, and sustainable legacies require strategic planning. (Masterman 2009, 84).

Major sports events are characterized with high anticipations and perceptions of economic growth and development on the host community. Expectations range from employment creation, publicity to wide media coverage which is bound to attract investments in the service sector. However, researchers argue that the anticipated benefits are usually overestimated given the expenditure tied to hosting the events. While sport events play the role of a catalyst for infrastructural advancement and development of venues as tourism destinations, poor planning can result to deficit in budgets and additional cost thus derailing the expected benefits. On the same breadth, planning should be strategic with long term focus on the utilization of the facilities even after the events are over. An example of under-utilization of facilities on South Korea is given where ten stadiums were constructed for FIFA World Cup but only five are regularly used. Mega events hold potential in attracting substantial amount of tourists and proper pre-event marketing can prompt visitor-stay extension increase visits to other regions outside the host venue. Moreover positive images created by an event and wide media attention can influence post-event tourism on the host destination. (Weed, 2011). In addition to the impacts described above, cultural, environmental and sports development, not forgetting social regeneration are considered as positive im-

pacts. Themes governing a particular event can include cultural traits for example opportunities for locals to provide food and drinks, music and related arts. This could have potential influence on future tourism especially if the pre-event promotions include cultural characteristics. Subsequently, integration of policies that support environmental awareness in the event planning could yield positively even long after the event is over. Examples given include the “green” approach in Sydney Olympics 2000, Athens 2004, Beijing “Green Olympics” 2008 among others, where planting of trees in the regions was involved and use of environmental friendly was encouraged and practiced. While new sport facilities are beneficial during the event, proper planning can also utilize them to develop upcoming talents and careers. New sport activities can also be initiated with sporting organizations offering opportunities to willing participants. (Masterman (2009, 83-112).

4 PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Product development can either be a process of creating a new product or improving an existing one, (Kotler et al. 2006, 322-323). A product can either be a physical product or a service product. This study focuses on service product and development of an existing product.

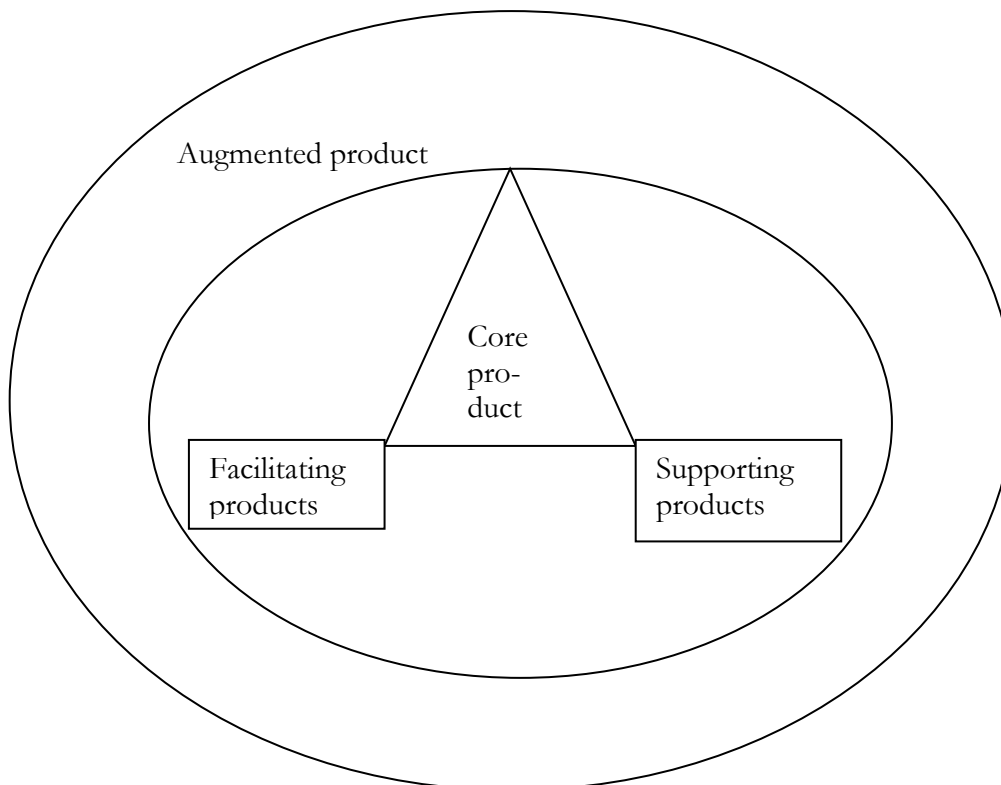
4.1 Features of a Service Product

Most tourism products are intangible, especially the service products meaning that they cannot be touched or seen physically. This feature that makes them understandable to the consumers only through the benefits attached to them. However it is challenging to create the image of an intangible product in consumers' minds. Another feature of service products is inseparability nature meaning that the supplier, the product and the venue of production cannot be separated. This leads to consumption during production since they also cannot be stored hence creating interaction between the buyer and the supplier. This interaction between the supplier and the consumer plays a key role in customer's perception of a service product. In addition, services are variable. This means that the final outcome and the process of service delivery differ with different consumers especially because of consumer involvement in production. It is thus challenging to examine the process to ensure coherency in standards. Furthermore, service products are perishable. They cannot be stored for future use but can only be consumed simultaneously as they are produced. Finally, services lack ownership. Due to the intangibility and inseparability nature, services cannot be owned but consumers buy the right to use or consume the service. (Palmer 2001, 15-21). When designing a product, it is crucial to consider all the features surrounding it. All products have physical and symbolic features. Physical features are the tangible features while symbolic features are perceived in the consumer's mind. They are related in the sense that physical features affect the symbolic significance or value of a product. The delivery of products and services plays an important role in the creation of symbolic value. (Seaton & Bennet 2000, 113- 114).

4.2 The Product Levels

Customers' needs and wants are the main considerations when designing a product. This is why a producer of a tourism product should consider the benefits tied to the product offered to convey the right value and importance. Products in the tourism and hospitality industry should take four levels, namely: the core product, the facilitating product, the supporting product and the augmented product. The core product is basically the main reason, theme or the foundation of a product. However, it can't reach the target customer without the help of the facilitating products. Just as the term "facilitating" suggests, they facilitate or provide access to the core product. It is thus impossible to market tourism core product without the facilitating products. On the other hand, the core product can survive with the facilitating products but cannot withstand the tides and waves of competition without the help of the supporting products. They add value through differentiation, making the product unique and strong. The choice of the facilitating products is very crucial as they are vulnerable to imitation from rivals (Kotler et al. 2006, 304-307). The figure below shows the product levels.

Figure 2. The product levels (Kotler et al. 2006, 305)



The products described above merge up to make the augmented product. It consists of the accessibility, atmosphere, interactions between customers and the service provider, customer participation also known as co-production and also customer interaction with other customers. In summary, the core product along with facilitating and supporting products make up what is received by the customer. On the other hand, the delivery determines the perception in customer's mind. Therefore the augmented product is the end result of a well-planned product which is finally offered in the market. The strength of a product to withstand competition relies on the mix as explained. (Kotler et al. 2006, 307-315). This framework is reviewed later in the conclusion.

4.3 Developing an Existing Product; Vuokatti Hiihto.

Before embarking on product development for an existing product, a tourism provider has to discover the current position of the product in question. A product matrix model by Seaton& Bennet (2000, 131) is an appropriate start. It shows various options in the product market thus a company can determine what purpose the product is projected at fulfilling. By determining the position of a product, a tourism provider is able to price the product in favour of the target market.

Figure3. Products matrix. (Seaton& Bennet 2000, 131).

Products	Markets	
	Existing Markets	New Markets
New	Introduce new product to present market	Launch new product to new market
Existing	Modification of existing product for present market	Reposition on present product to attract new market

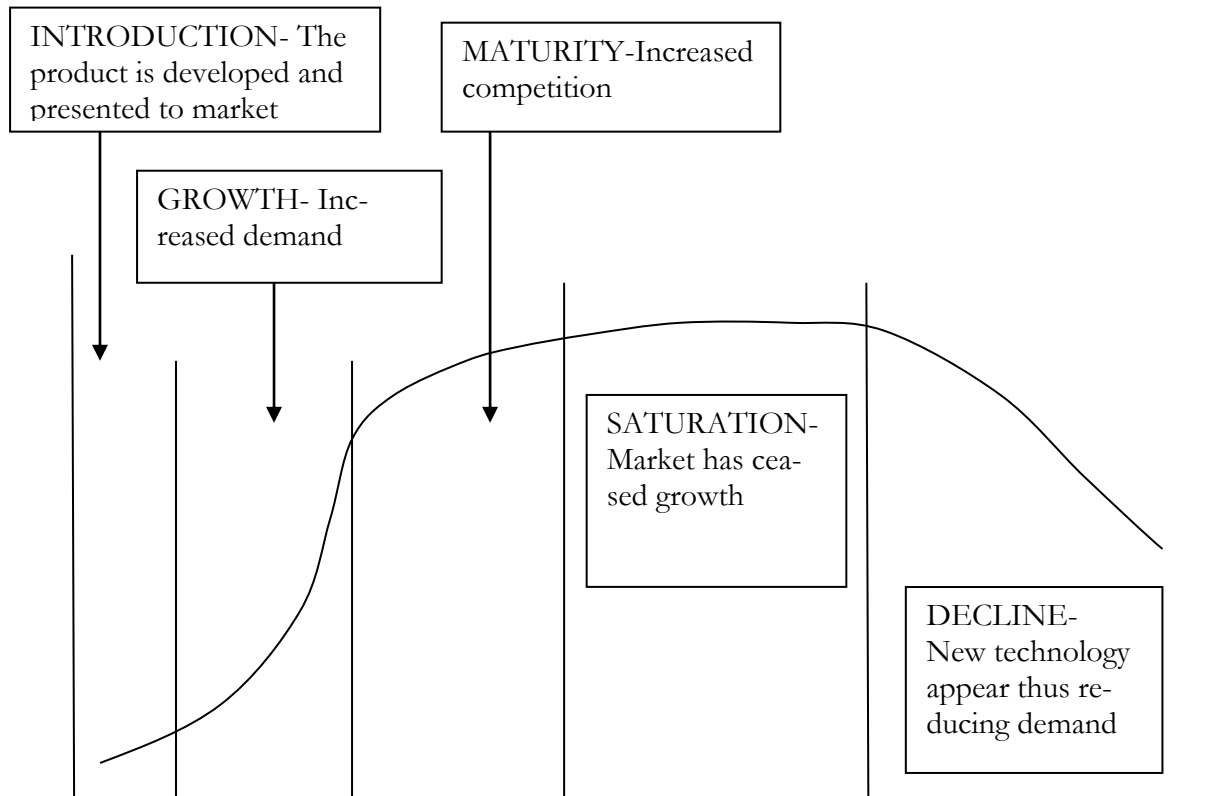
The process of developing an existing product differs from developing a new product. The existing product requires a review from different perspectives. This can be done through positioning (Palmer 2001, 177), a strategy used to extricate a product from competitors in

quest for a competitive edge. Positioning involves information delivery with the main objective of manipulating consumer's perception of a product. The two approaches to positioning are service quality and pricing. Quality encompasses the intended market range, accuracy of service delivery, the personnel and the service offering atmosphere while price is a gauge between the organization charges and its competitors. For effective positioning, three main steps are involved. To start with, identification of a company's strengths and opportunities in the intended market place is performed. The value of a product is associated with price. A company should be informed of the target customer profile when pricing the product. This way it is possible to raise or lower the prices according to the customers' perceived quality. Consequently, an evaluation of the possible positions should be made with the most applicable being selected. Selection should be based on cost, consistency and differential advantage. Lastly, development of the marketing mix to suit the selected position is done and communicated to the target market. Communication involves proper promotional measures (Palmer 2001, 177-183). Another way of determining the current position of a product is through the product lifecycle (PLC). Products have a lifecycle which evolves through five stages of introduction, growth, maturity, saturation and decline. It is important for companies to assess the product and determine which stage it is in before embarking on future development. The assessment should also consider the current market situation, since markets too have lifecycles. Further comparisons should be made on the trends within the product category (Seaton & Bennet 2000, 122- 123). According to Jobber (2001, 248) the PLC warns the companies that products are short-lived and need to be replaced by new ones every now and then to avoid a company's crash due to decline of all its products. It also emphasizes on the growth projections thus warning of proper investment planning in new products. The PLC is also a call for companies to review their marketing objectives and adjust them according to the market environment.

The PLC has five stages namely: introduction, growth, maturity, saturation and decline. At the introduction stage, an idea which has been developed to a concept then to a product is offered in the market. A keen observation is given to the product because some problems which need to be addressed may arise depending on the market environment. The growth stage is a succession of the introduction stage and sales increase as demand for the product is high. At this stage, competitors are watching and penetrate the market with similar products. The maturity stage is characterized by increased competition and slow market growth

contrary to the growth stage. The following phase of saturation consists of no growth and many competitors who compete against each other by price.

Figure 4. Product Lifecycle. (Palmer 2001, 191).



At the decline stage, the demand of the product fall as new substitutes enters the market. The product drops out of market and a possibility of a whole organization dropping too if it was depended on a single product. However applying the product lifecycle is difficult especially with service products. The certainty of a product lifecycle is hard to predict given the various environments surrounding a product which are external and internal. Although it is difficult to determine the actual phase of a particular service product in a lifecycle, the PLC is crucial in strategic planning. (Palmer 2001, 177-183).

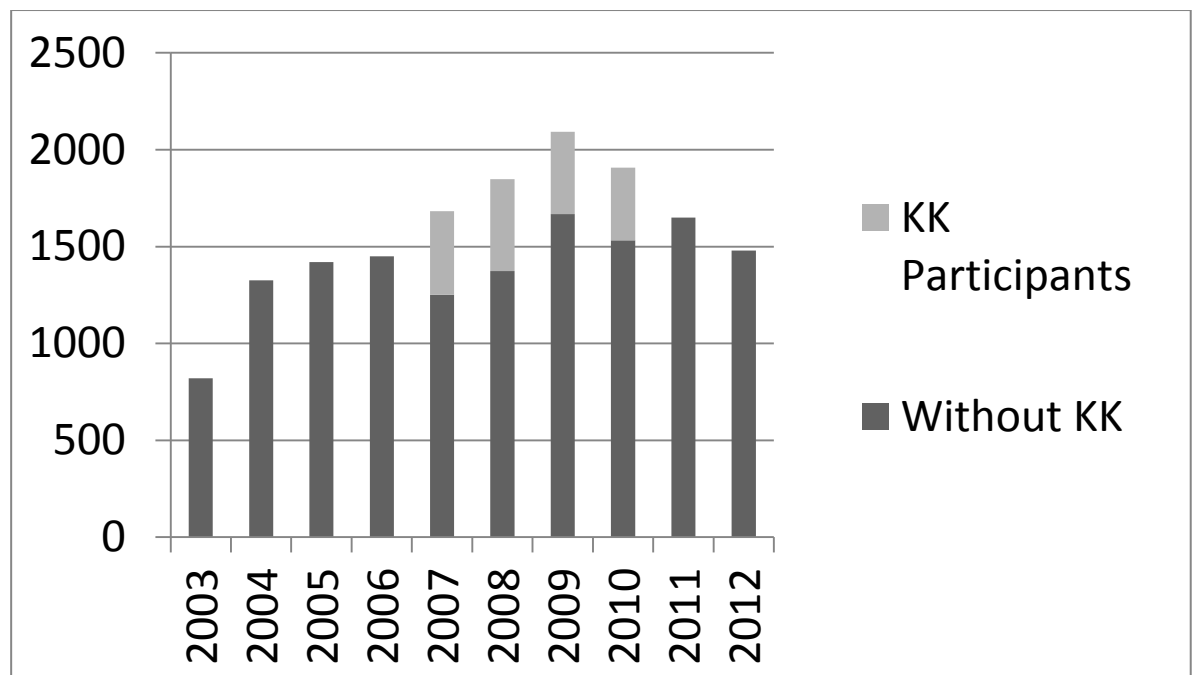
5 CASE: VUOKATTI HIIHTO AND EUROLOPPET

5.1 Definitions

Vuokatti Hiihto is a ski marathon event held on mid-March annually in Vuokatti, Kainuu region of Northern Finland. It is organized by Kainuun Liikunta, an organization focused on sports, recreation and physical fitness. Within the eleven years of its occurrence, Vuokatti Hiihto has been into partnerships with different ski organizations in quest to enhance productivity, competitiveness and customer satisfaction. Participation is usually characterized with over two thousand individuals in different lengths and styles. The venue has been the same but in years 2011 and 2012, the event has been held on a two-day basis as opposed to the last nine years when it occurred on a single day. According to the event manager Teemu Takalo, the change was implemented to facilitate the possibility of individual double participation in freestyle and classic style skiing since the two styles are held on different days contrary to earlier events. (Vuokatti Hiihto 2012)

Figure 5. Vuokatti Hiihto's participation since inception (Kainuun Liikunta 2012).

(KK= Kalevan Kierros)



An earlier partnership with “Kalevan Kierros” a ski marathon organization provided more than four hundred skiers to the event annually. However the withdrawal of the partnership denied the event the same number of skiers. The partnership ceased after the decision of the Kalevan organizers to move south with the hope of capturing more market share since most of their participants originated from that region. At the same time, Vuokatti Hiihto organizers were giving changing the format of the event from a one-day to a two-day event which as opposed to Kalevan Kierros program which was a one-day event. As mentioned earlier, both ski styles were performed on a single day but Vuokatti Hiihto wanted to hold them on separate days for each. On the other hand, Euroloppet is an association of ski marathons in Bodenmais, Bavaria Germany. It encompasses a total of thirteen ski marathons from Italy, Germany, France, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Spain, Finland, Latvia, Austria, and Switzerland. Participants of the ski races under the umbrella own a Euroloppet Passport, a document allowing them to enjoy offers that include reduction of prices during the purchase of equipment, travel and shopping vouchers among others. With a payment of membership fees, individual ski events are eligible to join the association. (Euroloppet 2012).

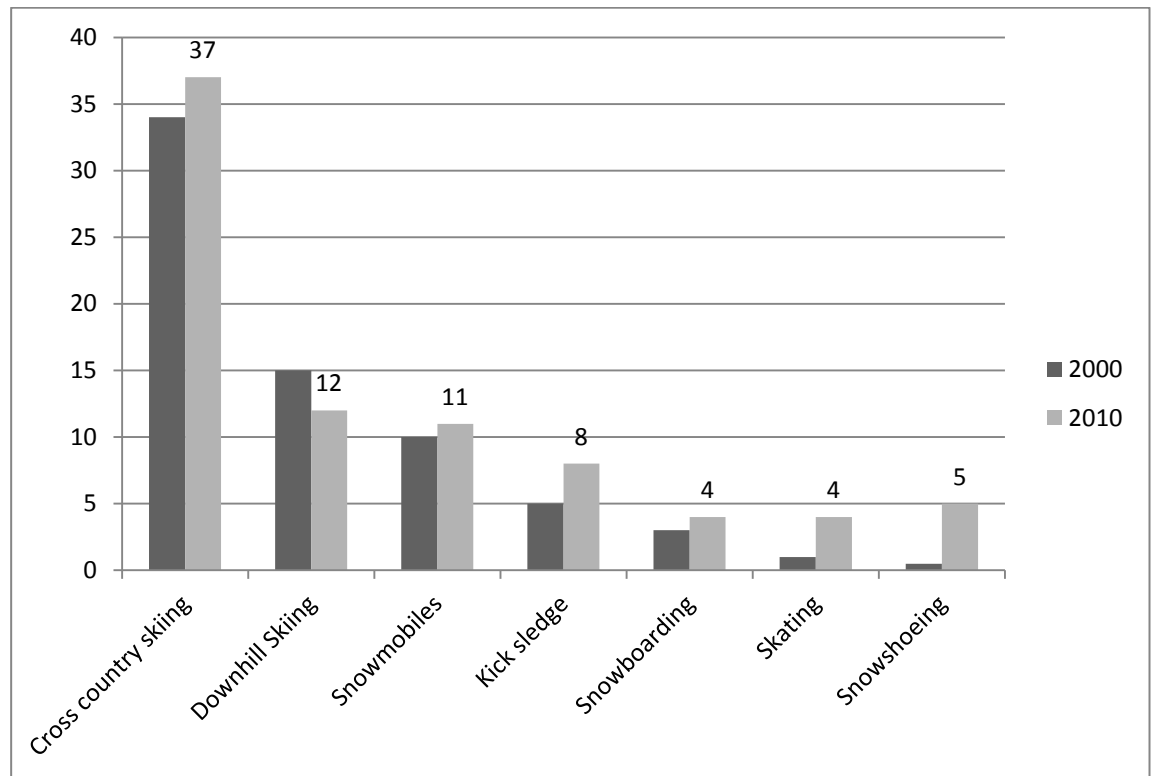
Kainuun liikunta is an association of sports clubs within Kainuu municipality, Oulu province, Finland. Established on 3.12.1994, its main activities revolve around physical fitness, recreation and sport event competitions. It is based in Kajaani, with its area of jurisdiction stretching to nine municipalities, namely; Kajaani, Sotkamo, Kuhmo, Paltamo, Puolanka, Hyrynsalmi, Ristijärvi, Suomussalmi and Vaala. Among the events organized by Kainuun Liikunta include running, hiking, cycling and skiing. Vuokatti Hiihto or Vuokatti ski is one of their big events organized annually in Vuokatti, Kainuu. (Kainuun Liikunta 2012). According to Seaton & Bennett(2000, 153), tourism products are intangible, meaning that they can't be touched, seen or tested before purchase hence the consumer relies on information provided. The moment Vuokatti Hiihto joins the Euroloppet, many ski participants and tour operators within the association will get the information that they never had thus triggering the urge to take part. Since the participants in the Euroloppet related ski marathons trust the events arranged under the organization, it won't be difficult for them to enroll to Vuokatti Hiihto since the image has been created. The partnership between Vuokatti Hiihto and the Euroloppet is projected at increasing the market share and internationality of the event. This means that the turn out on the registration of participants is expected to increase, and at the same time it is considered as a long-term investment since the Euroloppet passport holders

are expected to participate regularly on annual basis. It is crucial to note mention that Vuokatti Hiihto as an event has been in the Euroloppet Association once in the year 2003-2004 after which it withdrew. According to the event manager Teemu Takalo, the Euroloppet Association was young by then and unpopular compared to the current situation. He further adds that the annual membership fee was much higher compared to now and participation in the event was low. In his opinion, Euroloppet has matured into a big association with clear goals and objectives backed by proper marketing he is thus confident in joining the association. (Takalo T. 2012).

5.2 Skiing; History and Statistics

Skiing is thought to have originated in Norway with the discovery of rock carvings of two elk hunters which are dated back to 2000 B.C. It was later in Switzerland that Britons took skiing as a habit for the upper class. The practice spread to many countries and by 1924 it was introduced at the Olympics in Chamonix, France and New York in 1932, making it a key player in winter-based tourism. It is said to have a significant role in military activities. By 1960, winter resorts rose to popularity with extension of equipment, facilities and amenities since skiing had taken root as a major tourist sport. Wooden skis were replaced by metal and fiberglass while leather boots with plastic. The growth of skiing was rapid although a decline was recorded with the invention of snowboarding. Other types of skiing that have entered the market include Telemarking and Heliskiing, with the latter generating millions of revenue in some countries. (Hudson 2003, 89). A survey conducted by Finnish Forest Research Institute (December 2011) revealed that nearly a half of the Finnish adult population took part in cross country skiing annually. Northern Finland recorded 59.6% while southern Finland produced 44.5% of the total participants. The statistics indicated that cross country skiing was the most popular winter outdoor recreation activity, whose popularity had grown within the last ten years. Other winters activities like snowshoeing and skating which were uncommon ten years ago had also grown in popularity.

Figure 6. Winter outdoor activities participation comparison between 10 years. (Finnish Forest Research Institute 2011).



An average analysis suggested that all winter activities participation had declined with skating as an exception, (Figure 7). This was attributed to changes in climate conditions where winters have been late and short. The height of snow was noted to have been inconsistent with some places getting less than 20cm. The survey also discovered that Cross country skiing is popularly practiced on tracks, although a third of the skiers also ski off-track as illustrated (Figure 8) Skiing on tracks was discovered to be the basic skiing style. Almost all skiers learn to ski on tracks before advancing to other styles. Skiing off-tracks was considered an adventure by many.

The popularity of cross country skiing was also noted to have increased among the old while decreasing among the youth. Reasons given showed that elderly people have much time for leisure while young people are busy with studies, work and family.

The average cross country participation had slightly decreased compared to ten years ago, (Figure 9). The onset of winters and the amount of snow in centimeters varied throughout the decade affecting participation.

Figure7. Average participation times in winter activities after 10 years. (Finnish Forest Research Institute 2011).

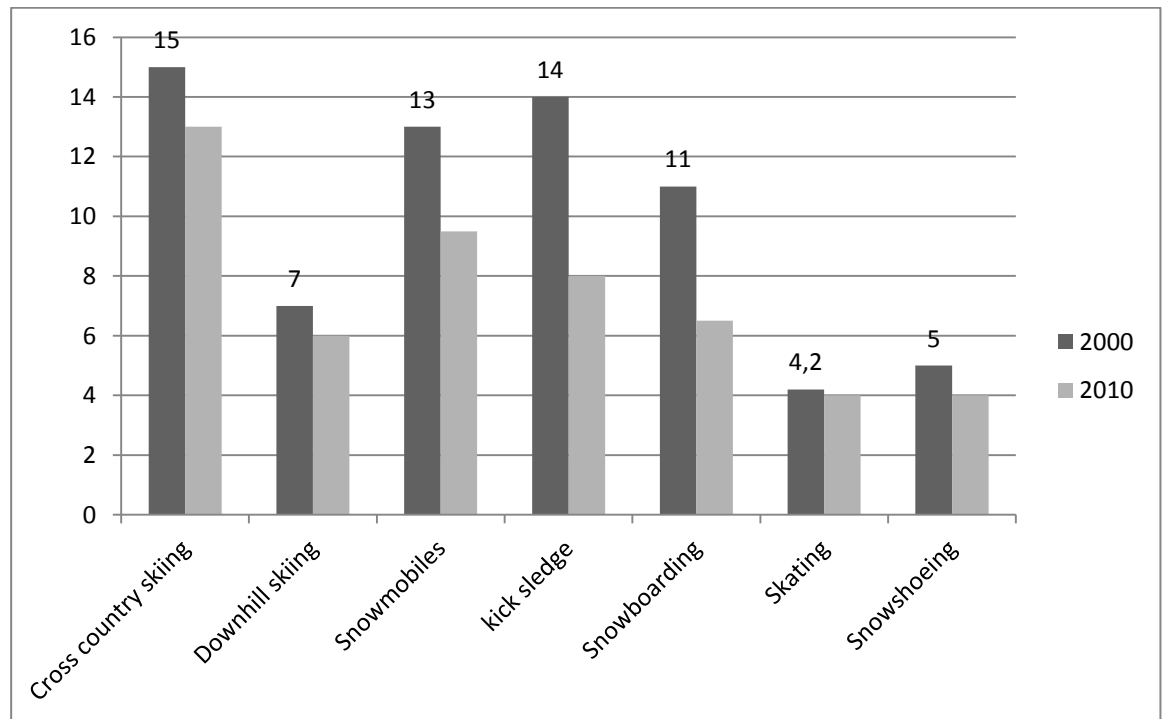


Figure 8. Percentage of on-track cross country ski participation. (Finnish Forest Research Institute 2011).

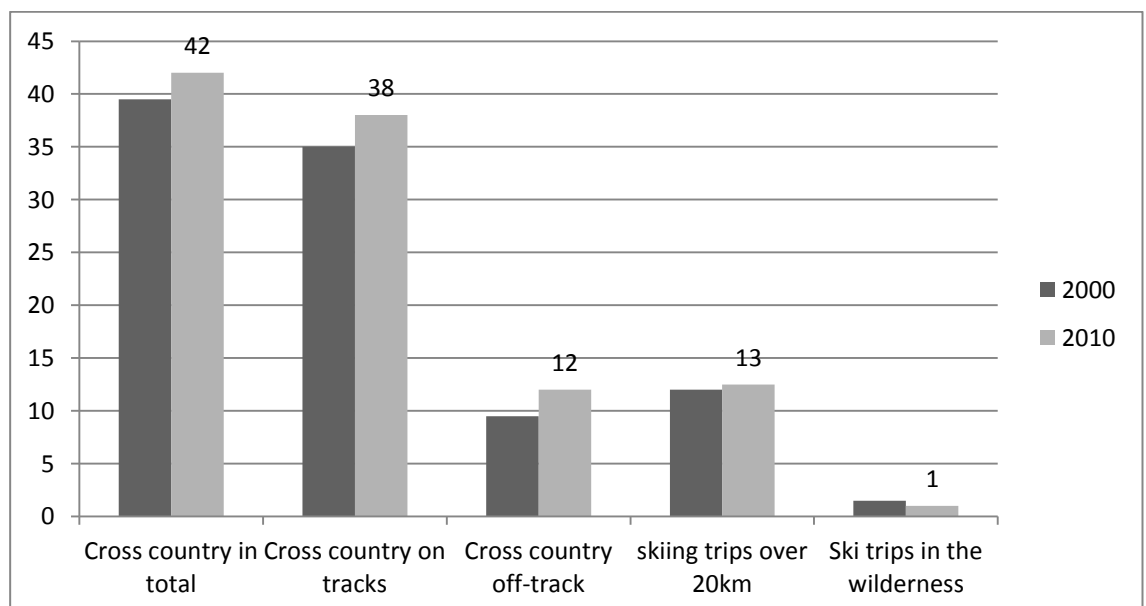
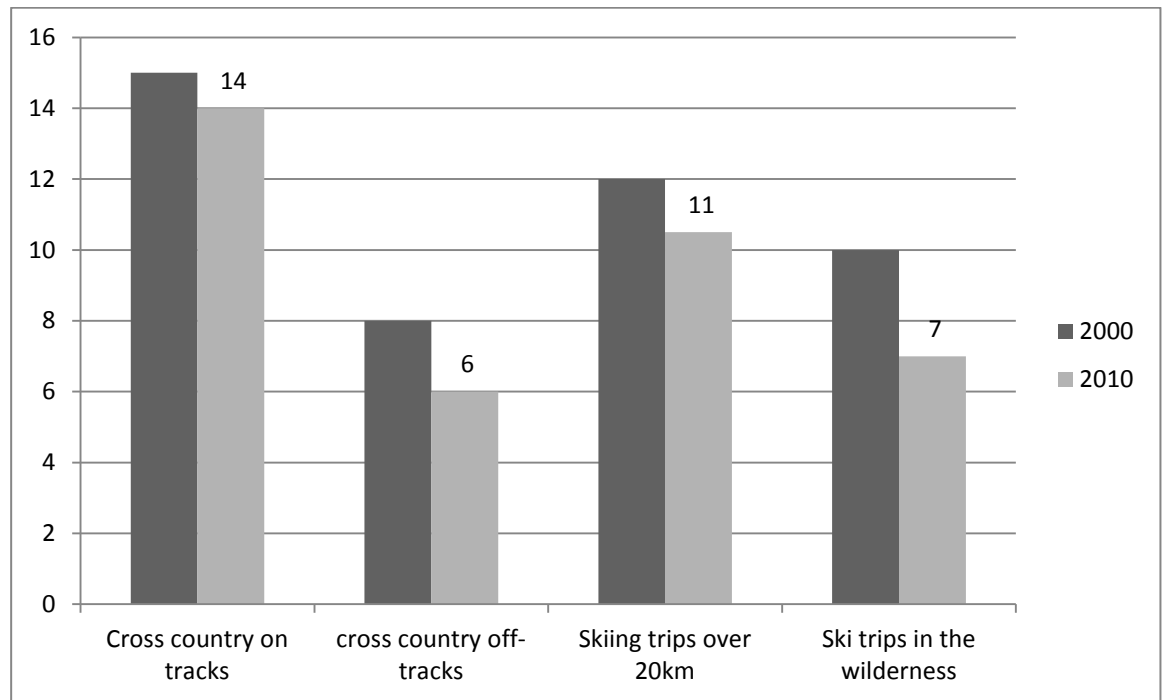


Figure 9. Average cross country participation times comparison within 10 years. (Finnish Forest Research Institute 2011).



Participation in winter activities is influenced by the amount of snow which varies with time. A survey conducted in winter 2009 and 2010 indicated that the most suitable days had more than twenty centimeters of snow. In year 2008 and 2009, central Finland and some parts of the south experienced less snow compared to winter 2010. In Kainuu, Northern Ostrobothnia and Lapland snow days were lesser compared to winter 2008 and 2009.

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Theoretical Framework

After a product is offered to the market, the sale lasts for a period of time after which it calls for reformulation in quest for profit maximization. The action might be fueled by the environmental forces for example market conditions as the product evolves through the lifecycle (Kotler et al. 2006, 338).

The research on this thesis was projected at improving product performance and customer satisfaction, through product development. Products are designed to satisfy needs and wants of the consumers. A product can be defined as anything that can fulfill a need, including experiences, places, ideas and people among others. Service providers must ensure high satisfaction of consumers instead of just satisfaction (Kotler et al. 2006, 15- 17). The process of developing an existing product is based on product levels (Kotler et al. 2006, 305), the product matrix (Seaton & Bennet. 2000, 131) and positioning of product (Palmer 200, 177). Product levels are applied to give the product the desired outlook for the intended market. The matrix helps to locate the position of the product in question in relation to market. Action decisions are therefore based on the nature of the market targeted. The positioning of the product involves pricing which is based on the customer perception of the product and identification of company's strengths and opportunities, (Palmer 2001,177-183). The positioning in this thesis focuses on the Euroloppet skiers who are the target market. The findings of the research will be used to price the product to fit the needs and wants of the customer.

6.2 Research Strategy

The research method is quantitative research. The analysis is done using statistical program spss to reach a conclusion. The survey was conducted on individual skiers in 17 countries of Europe, who host events related to the Euroloppet Association of Ski Marathons. The target group was chosen by the commissioning party, Kainuun Liikunta. The prime objective is to deduce the profiles of Euroloppet marathon skiers and their interest in skiing in Vuokatti

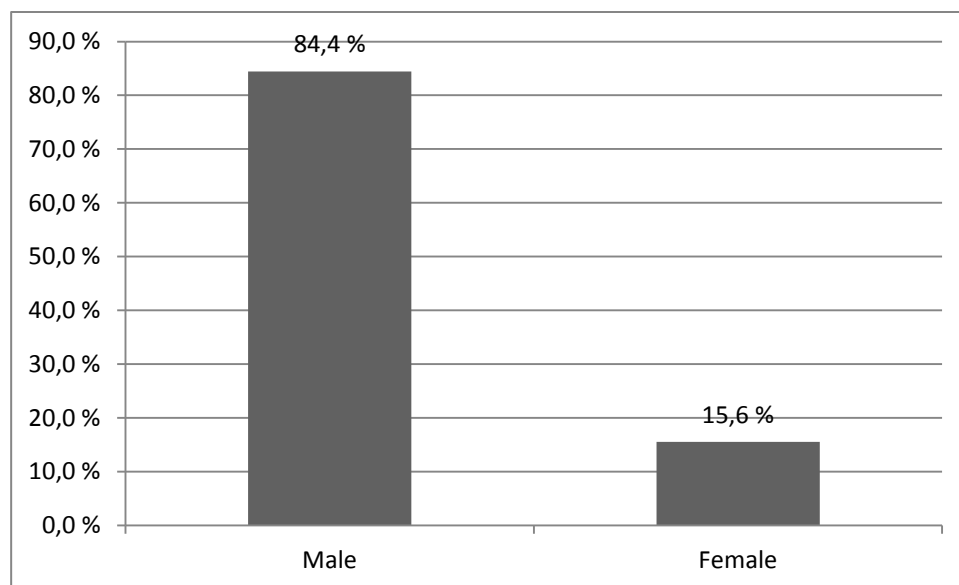
Hiihto, a ski marathon in Vuokatti, Kainuu Finland. The results are aimed at detecting whether it would be of essence for Vuokatti Hiihto to join the Euroloppet Association as an extension of market share. In addition, the results should indicate whether the event would require new staging dates according to the customer availability and preference. The survey was conducted with the help of Euroloppet Association, based in Bodenmais Germany since the author had no access to target respondents' contact information due to the German Law of Data Protection. The questionnaire was originally constructed in English language then translated to German with the help of a German friend. Both versions were incorporated into a data collection program on the internet and the links sent to the Euroloppet Association via email. Participation in the survey was voluntary and the respondents were served with the questionnaire through the Euroloppet newsletter where the links were attached. The newsletter appeared thrice at different intervals. Of the more than 3000 emails distributed, 92 responded and the rest did not due to reasons not well understood. Partly it might be due to language barrier since the questionnaire was provided only in two languages, English and German. Another inconvenience might have been caused by the channel used (newsletter) since some individuals might have deleted e-mails carrying the newsletter as the level of importance varies between individuals. However, this cannot be ascertained. The data was collected using a questionnaire which covered 19 questions. 18 of the questions were categorical and only one was open-ended. All of the categorical questions were multiple-choice. The format was meant to collect information without giving much pressure to the respondents.

7 RESULTS ANALYSIS

7.1 Profile of a Euroloppet Skier.

The survey was conducted on the European countries where most of the targeted respondents originate. The target group consisted of those cross country skiers who have been participating in the races under the Euroloppet association. In total, respondents of the survey represented 17 nations of which 15 were European which included Austria, Czech Republic, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Switzerland, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The other two nations were America and Canada, each represented by 2 and 1 respondents respectively, (Appendix 2/2, Question 3). Results indicated that male gender dominated the participation in the ski marathons organized under the Euroloppet. While 84.4% of male participated in the ski marathons, only 15.6% of female did.

Figure 12. Gender among the respondents (n=92)



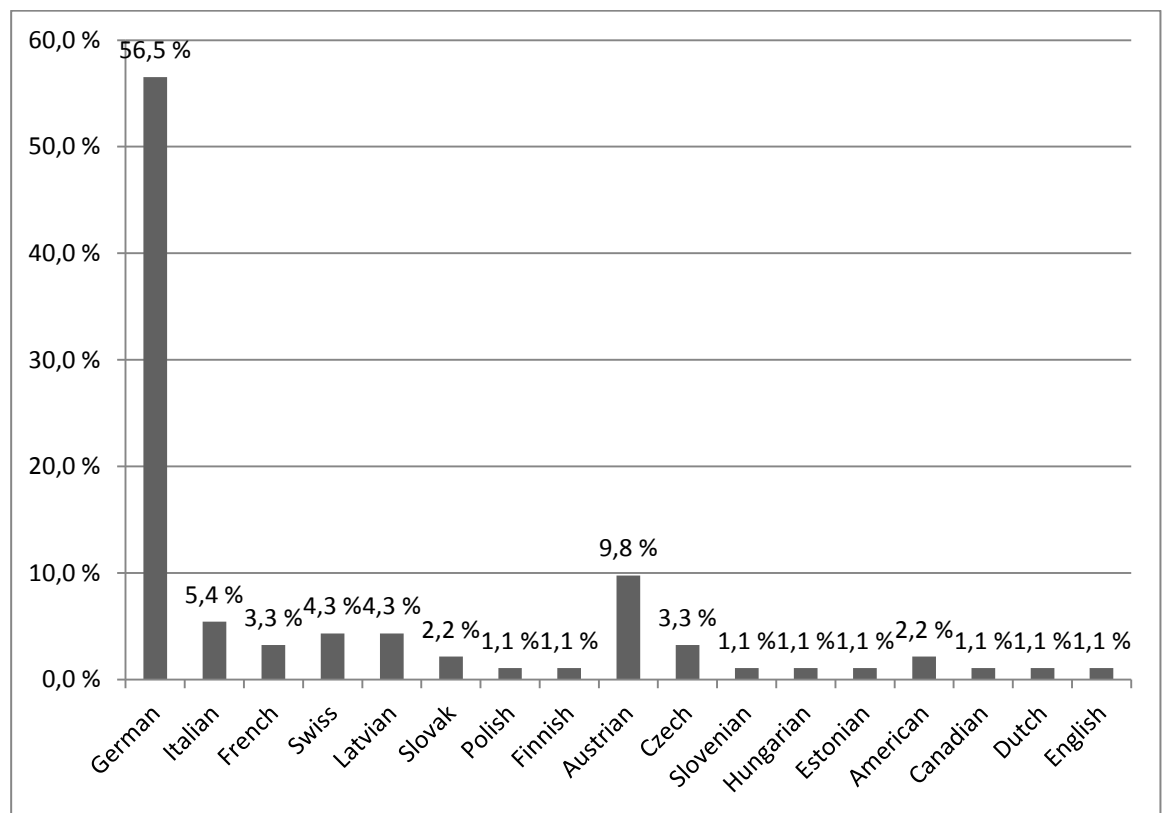
In terms of age, young adults showed less participation compared to middle-aged Europeans. The highest number among the respondents was between 50 and 60 years old followed by the age class of 40-49 years old. Only 10% of the respondents were above 60 years of age, (Appendix 2/1, Question 2). It was also discovered that interest in both skiing styles

(Freestyle and Classical style) did not differ much. 55.1% of the respondents preferred the classical style while 44.9% were interested in freestyle, (Appendix 2/4, Question 6). The favourite skiing length among the respondents was inquired and almost half (48%) of the respondents preferred 30-45km while 33% were in favour of skiing below 30km. A less number was interested in skiing more than 45km, (Appendix 2/3, Question 5). Concerning the frequency of participation, most (31.9%) of the skiers usually ski for 2-3 races in one winter season although a few manage to ski four times or more, (Appendix 2/4, Question 7). Regarding participation in ski races abroad, observations showed that 83% of the skiers participated in races outside their home countries, (Appendix 2/5, Question 8). It was also revealed that most of the skiers in the Euroloppet do not use travel agencies to attend ski marathon races. Travel plans are arranged independently by the individuals, (Appendix 2/6, Question 9).

7.2 Main Findings

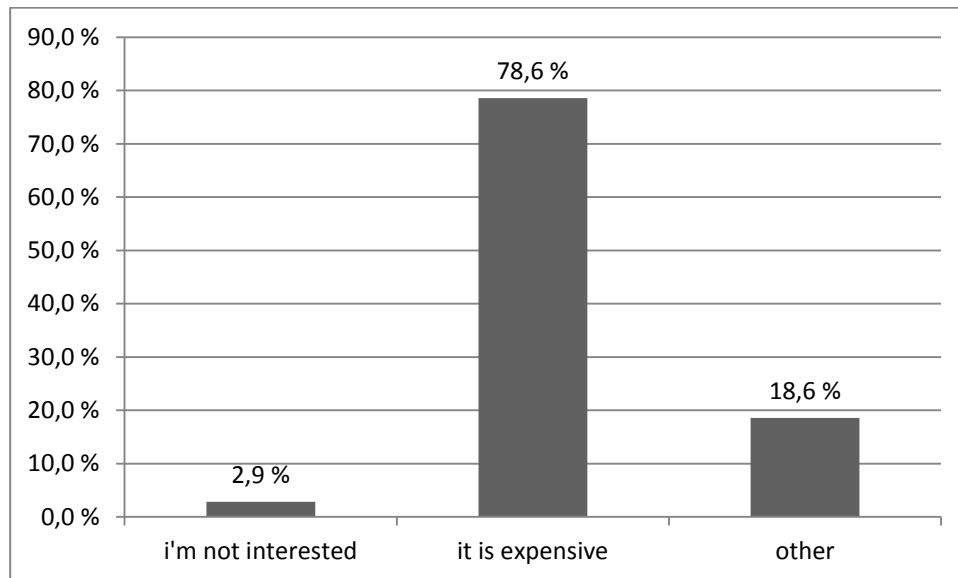
In the figure below, German skiers represent the majority of the skiers within the Euroloppet. This may be caused by the fact that Euroloppet Association is based in Germany and thus popular to the German skiers. On the other hand, use of German language in the questionnaire may have played a positive role on the respondent behaviour since human beings are more comfortable with their mother tongue compared to other foreign languages. This can also be the underlying factor behind the Austrian respondents who also use German language. Other nationalities who provided less numbers of respondents may have encountered language barriers or less popularity of the events.

Figure 13. Respondents' Nationality (92 respondents).



Upon probing why the respondents haven't been participating in Finnish ski marathons and why they would not in future, 78.6% cited expenses. They felt that travelling to Finland is expensive especially accommodation. While few had no particular reason at all, some were uninformed about the races. However, only a small number (2.9%) of the respondents were completely uninterested. This indicates that marketing in the Finnish ski marathons has not been targeting the skiers in the European zone; rather it has been concentrating on Finland.

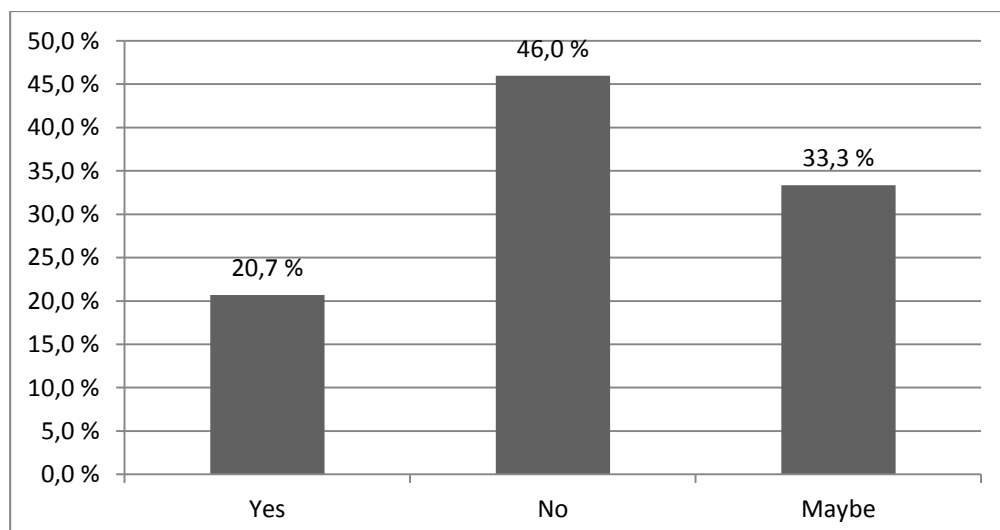
Figure 14. Reasons for non-participation in Finnish ski marathons.(n=70).



A new ski marathon would be incorporated in Vuokatti Hiihto at the beginning of December if the respondents were willing to participate. However 20.7% of the total respondents were interested while 46% declined. 33.3% of the respondents would probably participate.

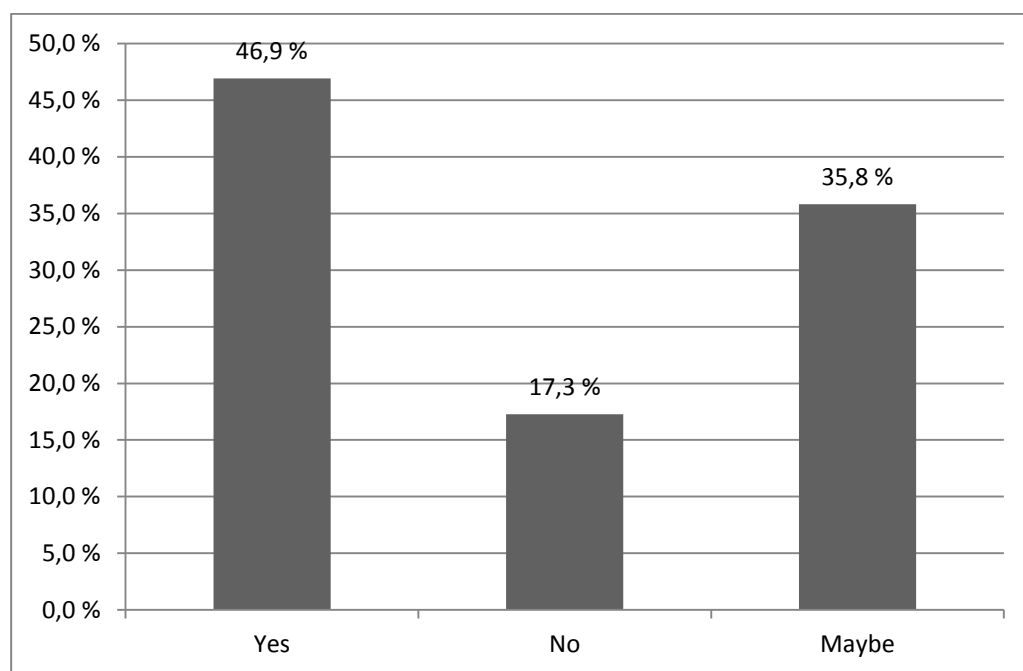
Out of those interested in the introduction of the new marathon in December, majority (76.8%) preferred skiing less than 40k race. This translates that it would be of no importance to introduce the new race in December, as it would be committing the resources into a wrong direction.

Figure 13. Interest in new ski marathon in December. (n=87).



A question was asked to enquire whether the respondents would consider it economical to participate in both Vuokatti hiihto and Lapponia hiihto if they were to be held within one week interval from each other. This way the findings would be useful in determining the future dates of the event. Of the respondents, 46.9% were willing to participate while 35.8% would probably do, but 17.3% were not interested.

Figure 15. Willingness to participate in both Vuokatti Hiihto and Lapponia Hiihto if held within one week interval from each other, (n=81).



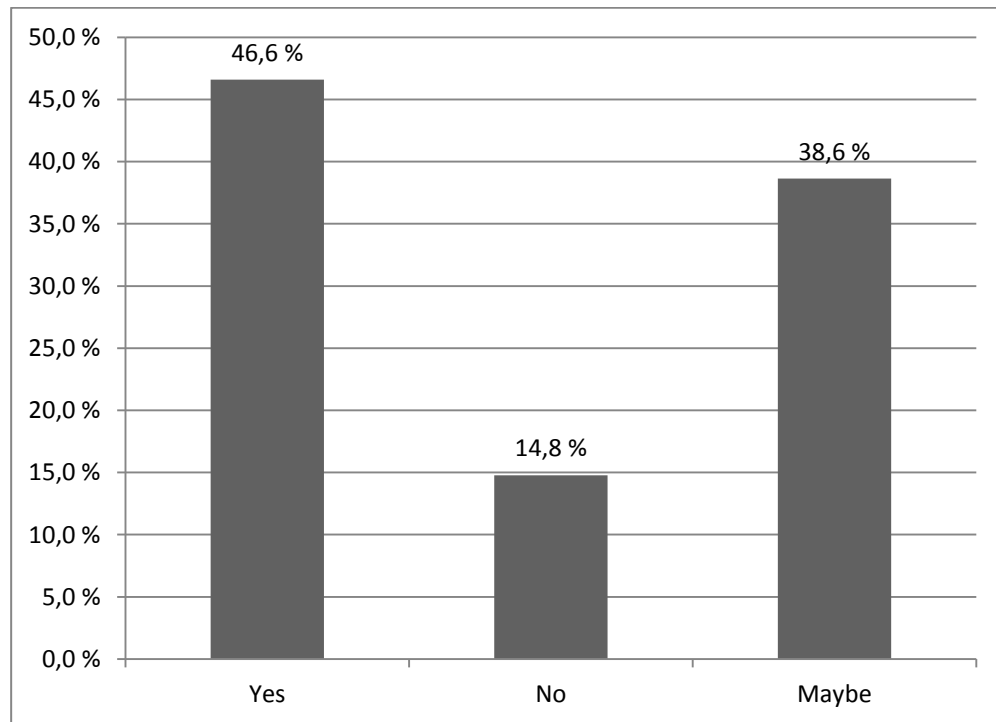
In order to obtain whether travelling to Finland for ski participation was common among the respondents, a question was asked about earlier participation and travel experiences to Lapponia hiihto. Although majority (82.4%) of the respondents had not participated, out of the 17.6% who participated all experienced no difficulties in travelling and participation.

(Appendix 2/7, Question 11). A question was asked about participation in Vuokatti hiihto in year 2003-2004 when it had joined the Euroloppet association. The event was still young and the Euroloppet association too whose marketing strategy was yet to develop. Results clearly indicate that none of the respondents had participated. Appendix 2/7, Question 12).

However asked about the future participation in Vuokatti Hiihto, 46.6% of the respondents were willing to participate, while 38.6% would probably participate. 14.8% were totally unin-

terested. This again confirms the earlier discussion findings that marketing has been neglecting the skiers interviewed because many claimed to have had no information regarding the event.

Figure 16. Interest in future participation in Vuokatti Hiihto (n=88)



8 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

8.1 Discussion

The objective of this study was to analyse the profile of a Euroloppet skier and potential interest in participating in Vuokatti Hiihto as the basis of developing an existing product. The concept of product development laid the foundation of this study. The findings will be reflected to the theoretical framework. A sub-division of the main focus of study follows below to bring out a better analysis.

8.1.1 Service Product And Vuokatti Hiihto

The quality of a service or a service product is affected by the underlying distinct features. The *intangible* nature of a service product such as Vuokatti hiihto is that it can never be seen or touched before participation. The participants' experience can only be recorded after the event. Under the same breadth, services have *inseparable* nature meaning that skiing event competition cannot commence without the participants who in this case are the consumers. In addition, skiing experience *varies* between participants as different participants have different expectations from the event. Also, opinions of different personnel involved in the service delivery for example judges in skiing competitions may differ thus affecting the results. However, variability can be reduced by use of computerized machines to reduce faults and failures such as electronic chips and GPS systems used in Vuokatti Hiihto. Moreover, *perishability* in services can be depicted in Vuokatti Hiihto since organizers cannot store event experience for future use once a participant fails to take part in the event. Finally, services lack *ownership* and Vuokatti Hiihto's participants do not own the event's venue or facilities during and after the event, except the experience which is perceived in their mind. It is therefore correct to conclude that Palmer 2001, and Kotler et al. 2006 are right in their argument concerning the service product.

8.1.2 The Product Levels

Kotler et. al 2006 insists that the needs and wants of the consumers have to be prioritized when developing a product. The *core product* which is the heart of a product some access to the consumer. Vuokatti Hiihto is a ski competition which does not differ much with other ski marathons by just considering the core product; cross country skiing. However the information provided for easier access by the participants and booking systems for example internet registration make up the *facilitating products*. The provision of information in both Finnish and English languages paves way for non-Finnish potential participants to consider participation. Information about accommodation and transportation not only saves time for the participants when making entries but also builds confidence about the validity of the event. Furthermore, a product is sellable with the combination of the above mentioned core and facilitating products. However, it needs more than those to withstand competition from similar products. The *supporting products* add value by creating uniqueness and differentiation. The wax service along the course, storage of clothes, medal, soap, swimming, sauna, and hot soup after the race along with lottery participation, adds value to the consumer experience. Finally, the *augmented product* is an amalgamation of the three described products; core, facilitating and supporting products. In addition to those is the customer interaction with other customers and in Vuokatti hiihto's case, skiers interact before the event, during the meal and in sauna and swim hall. Moreover interaction between the consumers and producers is evident since participants face the organizers when storing clothes, late registration and also at the awarding ceremony. The atmosphere created during these interactions produces the final image and experience in the participant's mind. The findings of this study agree with the theory on product levels thus validating it as right.

8.1.3 Developing An Existing Product

Repositioning an existing product to attract new markets is one of the product options provided by Seaton& Bennet(2000) as a way of dealing with an already existing product. Vuokatti Hiihto is a 10 year old event which has been attracting participants mainly from Kainuu but also some parts of southern Finland too. However, targeting outside Kainuu and Finland is an international approach which can be accomplished by joining the Euroloppet association. This approach does not in any way deny the usual Finnish participants from taking part but

it is an expansion of the market share. With more than 13 countries in the Euroloppet association, Vuokatti Hiihto will be in a position to capture European cross country skiers. Joining the Euroloppet is a great chance of promoting the event internationally and regionally.

As Palmer (2001) argues, *positioning* the product involves manipulating the consumer's perception of a product. By realising the strengths and opportunities, an organization is able to deliver the right product at the right price. An analysis of the consumer's profile is required hence the first objective of this study; determining the profile of a Euroloppet skier. Through knowledge of a customer profile, the company is able to adjust the price of a service product according to the skier's perceived quality. Subsequently, once the position has been determined, development of the marketing mix is introduced and communicated to the customers. Vuokatti Hiihto is focused at communicating the new position (being part of the Euroloppet) to the skiers, most of which do not know its existence. Information will be available on its web pages, Euroloppet web pages and newsletters.

According to Jobber (2001), *product lifecycle (PLC)* is a good tool in warning organizations to review their marketing strategies and adjust them according to the market conditions. Taking the market situation into account, Vuokatti Hiihto can be assessed from two dimensions. To start with Vuokatti Hiihto would fall on the decline stage of the lifecycle if considered by the total amount of participation since its inception (Figure 5). This is due to the number of participants gained from the earlier partnership with "Kalevan Kierros", an association of ski marathons that provide participants from different parts of the country, especially from southern Finland to its partner ski events. As the diagram illustrates, the partnership lasted for four years, through which the lifecycle indicates a tremendous growth. However, a second assessment would place the event at a mature stage, where the participation revolves around a certain height with slight falls and rises. At the same time, it would be unfair to make assertions based on the number of participation alone. An interview with the event manager, Teemu Takalo revealed that climate has played a role in relation to participation. The 2010-2011 winter season arrived early thus providing ample time for participants to practice skiing ahead of the competition, a fact visible on the graph below. On the other hand, 2011-2012 winter season came late and contrary to the earlier season, denied participants sufficient time for rehearsal which in turn prompted skiers to avoid competitive skiing. Having made an assessment, Vuokatti Hiihto reviewed their marketing strategy and decided to commission this study in hunt for extended market. Likewise, the study conforms to Jobber (2001) and Palmer (2001) that PLC is an essential tool for strategic planning.

8.2 Conclusion And Recommendation.

The study revealed that a Euroloppet skier as a middle- aged person who can ski both free-style and classic style or one of them with a maximum length of 45km. It was also concluded that the skier is a flexible person who participates in foreign countries' races with no help of travel agencies. More observations showed that the Euroloppet skier regard Finland as an expensive destination especially if the accommodation is unarranged. Although most skiers cited lack of information concerning Finnish ski marathons, a half of the respondents were willing to participate in Vuokatti Hiihto in future. Further analysis indicated that a Euroloppet skier prefers skiing in March rather than December, taking into account the earlier discussion on the question regarding the introduction of a ski race in December.

It is evident that with Vuokatti hiihto joining the Euroloppet association, it is possible to capture the intended market successfully. However, a lot has to done regarding marketing mix. As discussed earlier, once a product is positioned, there is a need to communicate to the target group. Marketing efforts need to be implemented and especially in many languages. Currently Vuokatti Hiihto exists in only two languages; Finnish and English but German language would also be an important consideration. This is in regard to the nationalities who answered the questionnaire of which 56.5% were Germans which proved the impact of language in communication. By doing so, Austrians would also be properly informed given that they use German as their mother tongue. Furthermore, Vuokatti Hiihto organizers should enhance their relationship with accommodation providers in the region so as to create favourable and considerable rates for the skiers during the event. This should be in turn communicated to the customers.

In addition to those recommendations, the event manager Teemu Takalo shares same sentiments. He says that considering the responses, those who rejected participation directly are fewer compared to those who totally agreed and the others who probably would; thus Vuokatti Hiihto should join the Euroloppet. He further adds that the fact that respondents are willing to participate in other Finnish ski marathons such as Lapponia Hiihto during the same period, it is an opportunity for Vuokatti Hiihto to enhance cooperation with other ski marathons in the neighbouring regions. Consequently, he notes that the intended introduction of new ski marathon in December is futile; hence it would not be a consideration but further adds that the current lengths in Vuokatti Hiihto corresponds to respondents favour-

ites; that is, between 30 and 60km. Instead, he advocates for ways of improving travel information as well as searching for affordable accommodation for the participants. In conclusion, he feels that this study was an eye opener regarding the future of Vuokatti Hiihto.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 THESIS RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 2 FREQUENCY TABLES FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSED QUESTIONS.

THESIS RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

TOPIC: SHOULD VUOKATTI HIIHTO JOIN THE EUROLOPPET?

The purpose of this questionnaire is gather information from Euroloppet skiers, who are also potential Vuokatti Hiihto skiers. The feedback of the questionnaire is expected to :

- Clarify the profile of a typical Euroloppet skier.
- Find out if Euroloppet skiers are interested to take part in Vuokatti Hiihto or new Ski marathon in Vuokatti in December.

VUOKATTI HIIHTO

Vuokatti Hiihto is a 10yr old event that is held annually in mid-march, in Vuokatti Finland. It is a 2 day event (Saturday and Sunday) with two styles(Freestyle and Classical). Freestyle is held on Saturday and Classical style on Sunday. The distances for both styles include: 15,30,60km

VUOKATTI

Vuokatti is located north, approximately 585km from Helsinki. The nearest airport is at Kajaani, 40 km to Vuokatti. There are at least 2-4 flights to Kajaani daily. A direct bus from the airport to Vuokatti is available and takes 30 min. Also, there are approximately 20 buses daily from Kajaani City to Vuokatti and vice versa.

Accommodation is available in Vuokatti and Kajaani with preferences of cottages, family apartments and hotels. Vuokatti is the home to the world's first ski tunnel, Vuokatti Sports Institute and also the training centre for the Finnish National Skiing Team. The first snow track is open every year on 10th October at 10 o'clock. There are possibilities of practicing all different kinds of skiing.

There are expectations of new non-stop, one hour flights in 2012, from Tallin, Estonia to Kajaani. The flights will depart four times a week (on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays) starting April 2012.

1. Gender : Male_____ Female_____

2. Age : under 18 yrs_____ 18-29_____ 30-39_____ 40-49_____ 50-60_____ over 60_____

3. Nationality:

German____ Italian____, French____, Norwegian____ Austrian____ Hungarian____
Czech____ Danish____ Belgian____, other, what?_____

4. How many years have you been participating in Euroloppet ski races:

- 1-3yrs_____

- 3-5yrs_____
- 5-8yrs _____
- More than 8 yrs_____

5. (i) What is your favorite skiing length in Ski marathons?

- under 30 km_____
- 30-45 km_____
- 45-60 km_____
- over 60 km_____

(ii)What is your favorite skiing style on Ski marathons?

- Free style_____
- Classic style_____

6. How many Euroloppet races you take part in during one season?

- 1_____
- 2_____
- 3_____
- 4_____
- 5_____
- more than 5_____

7. Do you take part in Euroloppet races in foreign countries?

- Yes_____
- No_____

8. If you take part in Euroloppet races in foreign countries, do you use travel agents?

- Yes_____
- No_____

(iii) If yes, what travel agents (name of the company):_____

9. (i) Have you ever participated Lapponia Hiihto in Finland?

- Yes_____
- No_____

(ii) If yes, how did you experience travelling to Lapponia Hiihto?

- It was easy_____
- It was quite easy_____

- It was difficult_____

10. Have you ever participated Vuokatti Hiihto in Finland (Euroloppet race 2003-2004)?

- Yes_____
- No_____

11. (i) Would you be interested to take part in Vuokatti Hiihto if it was a Euroloppet race again?

- Yes_____
- No_____
- Maybe_____

(ii) If yes or maybe, would you be interested to take part in both Vuokatti Hiihto and Lapponia Hiihto if there were within one week from each other?

- Yes_____
- No_____
- Maybe_____

12. (i) Would you be interested to take part in new ski marathon in Vuokatti, Finland if it was held at the beginning of December (Start of the European ski marathon season)?

- Yes_____
- No_____
- Maybe_____

(i) If yes, what would be the most suitable skiing length for the race (it would be skied on classic style at the 10 km first snow track. For more than 10km, there will be multiple skiing on same track)?

- under 30 km_____
- 30-40 km_____
- 40-50 km_____
- over 50 km_____

13. What is the major reason why you have never took part in any ski marathons in Finland or would not also be interested to participate in any future?

- I'm not interested in to ski in Finland_____
- It's too expensive to travel to Finland_____
- Some other reason, what:_____

14. Your wishes to ski marathon organizers in Finland (what is good, and what should be done better) _____

GERMAN VERSION

UMFRAGEBOGEN BACHELORARBEIT

THEMA: SOLLTE VUOKATTI HIIHTO DEM EUROLOPPET BEITRETEN?

Das Ziel dieser Umfrage ist es, Informationen über Euroloppet-Teilnehmern als potenzielle Vuokatti Hiihto-Teilnehmer zu sammeln. Vom Ergebnis der Umfrage wird erwartet, dass es:

- Ein Profil des typischen Euroloppet-Teilnehmers erstellt.
- Das Interesse von Euroloppet-Teilnehmern am Vuokatti Hiihto oder dem neuen Skimarathon in Vuokatti im Dezember darstellt.

VUOKATTI HIIHTO

Vuokatti Hiihto ist eine 10 Jahre alte Veranstaltung, welche jährlich Mitte März in Vuokatti, Finnland, stattfindet. Es ist eine Wochenendveranstaltung (Samstag und Sonntag) mit zwei verschiedenen Langlaufstilen (Klassisch und Skating). Am Samstag finden die Skating-

Wettbewerbe statt und sonntags die Wettbewerbe im klassischen Stil. Für beide Tage gelten Distanzen von 15, 30 und 60 km.

VUOKATTI

Vuokatti liegt ungefähr 585 km nördlich von Helsinki. Der nächste Flughafen befindet sich in Kajaani, 40km entfernt von Vuokatti. 2-4 Flüge fliegen Kajaani täglich an. Die direkte Busverbindung vom Flughafen nach Vuokatti dauert 30 min. Zusätzlich fahren ca. 20 Busse täglich von Kajaani Stadt nach Vuokatti und zurück. Unterkünfte befinden sich sowohl in Vuokatti als auch Kajaani, die Auswahl reicht von gemütlichen Ferienhäuschen und Familienappartements bis Hotels. In Vuokatti befindet sich der erste Skitunnel der Welt; des Weiteren befinden sich hier das Vuokatti Sportinstitut und das Trainingzentrum der Finnischen Nationalmannschaft im Skisport. Die erste Langlaufloipe eröffnet jedes Jahr am 10. Oktober um 10.00 Uhr. Alle Arten des Skilaufens können hier praktiziert werden.

Ab dem 2. April 2012 bestehen neue, einstündige Direktflugverbindungen von Tallinn, Estland, nach Kajaani. Die Flüge starten an vier Tagen in der Woche (montags, mittwochs, donnerstags und samstags).

Für die Teilnehmer

1. Geschlecht : Männlich_____ Weiblich_____
2. Alter : unter 18 J._____ 18-29_____ 30-39_____ 40-49_____ 50-60_____ über 60_____
3. Nationalität: Deutsch_____ Italienisch_____ Französisch_____ Norwegisch_____ Österreichisch_____ Ungarisch_____ Tschechisch_____ Dänisch_____ Belgisch_____ Andere, was?_____
4. Wie viele Jahre haben Sie an Euroloppet Skiwettbewerben teilgenommen?
 - 1-3 Jahre_____
 - 3-5 Jahre_____
 - 5-8 Jahre _____
 - Mehr als 8 Jahre_____
5. (i) Welche Distanz favorisieren Sie in Skimarathons?
 - unter 30 km_____
 - 30-45 km_____
 - 45-60 km_____
 - über 60 km_____
- (ii) Welchen Langlaufstil favorisieren Sie in Skimarathons?
 - Skating-Stil_____
 - Klassischer Stil_____
6. An wie vielen Euroloppet-Wettbewerben nehmen Sie während einer Saison teil?
 - 1_____
 - 2_____
 - 3_____
 - 4_____
 - 5_____
 - Mehr als 5_____
7. Nehmen Sie an Euroloppet-Wettbewerben in anderen Ländern teil?
 - Ja_____
 - Nein_____

8. Falls Sie an Euroloppet-Wettbewerben in anderen Ländern teilnehmen, nutzen Sie Reiseagenturen?

- Ja_____
- Nein_____

(iii) Falls ja, nennen Sie diese bitte namentlich:

9. (i) Haben Sie schon mal am Lapponia Hiihto-Skimarathon in Finnland teilgenommen?

- Ja_____
- Nein_____

(ii) Falls ja, wie erlebten Sie die Anreise zu dieser Veranstaltung?

- Es war sehr einfach_____
- Es war recht einfach_____
- Es war schwierig_____

10. Haben Sie schon mal am Vuokatti Hiihto-Skimarathon in Finnland (Euroloppet-Wettbewerb 2003-2004) teilgenommen?

- Ja_____
- Nein_____

11. (i) Wären Sie an der Teilnahme am Vuokatti Hiihto-Skimarathon interessiert, falls es wieder ein Euroloppet-Wettbewerb wäre?

- Ja_____
- Nein_____
- Eventuell_____

(ii) Falls ja oder eventuell, wären Sie an der Teilnahme am Vuokatti Hiihto und am Lapponia Hiihto-Skimarathon interessiert, falls diese innerhalb einer Woche stattfänden?

- Ja_____
- Nein_____
- Eventuell_____

12. (i) Wären Sie daran interessiert, an einem neuen Skimarathon in Vuokatti, Finnland, teilzunehmen, wenn dieser Anfang Dezember stattfinden würde (Beginn der Europäischen Skimarathonsaison)?

- Ja_____
- Nein_____

- Eventuell_____

(ii) Falls ja, wie wäre für Sie die ideale Länge (Es würde auf der 10 km langen Loipe im klassischen Stil gefahren werden, bei einer längeren Distanz mehrere Runden auf derselben Strecke)?

- unter 30 km_____
- 30-40 km_____
- 40-50 km_____
- über 50 km_____

13. Was ist der Hauptgrund, warum Sie nie an einem Skimarathon in Finnland teilnehmen oder in Zukunft an einer Teilnahme nicht interessiert wären?

- Ich habe kein Interesse am Skilaufen in Finnland_____
- Es ist zu teuer, nach Finnland zu reisen_____
- Andere Gründe, nämlich:_____

14. Ihre Wünsche und Anregungen an die Organisatoren von Skimarathons in Finnland (was ist gut, was könnte verbessert werden?)

FREQUENCY TABLES FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSED QUESTIONS.

Question 1. Gender

Statistics

Gender

N	Valid	90
	Missing	4

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	76	80,9	84,4	84,4
	Female	14	14,9	15,6	100,0
	Total	90	95,7	100,0	
Missing	System	4	4,3		
Total		94	100,0		

Question 2. Age

Statistics

Age

N	Valid	89
	Missing	5

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-29	16	17,0	18,0	18,0
	30-39	14	14,9	15,7	33,7
	40-49	20	21,3	22,5	56,2
	50-60	30	31,9	33,7	89,9

over 60	9	9,6	10,1	100,0
Total	89	94,7	100,0	
Missing System	5	5,3		
Total	94	100,0		

Question 3. Nationality

Statistics

Nationality

N	Valid	92
	Missing	2

Nationality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	German	52	55,3	56,5	56,5
	Italian	5	5,3	5,4	62,0
	French	3	3,2	3,3	65,2
	Swiss	4	4,3	4,3	69,6
	Latvian	4	4,3	4,3	73,9
	Slovak	2	2,1	2,2	76,1
	Polish	1	1,1	1,1	77,2
	Finnish	1	1,1	1,1	78,3
	Austrian	9	9,6	9,8	88,0
	Czech	3	3,2	3,3	91,3
	Slovenian	1	1,1	1,1	92,4
	Hungarian	1	1,1	1,1	93,5
	Estonian	1	1,1	1,1	94,6
	American	2	2,1	2,2	96,7
	Canadian	1	1,1	1,1	97,8

	Dutch	1	1,1	1,1	98,9
	English	1	1,1	1,1	100,0
	Total	92	97,9	100,0	
Missing	System	2	2,1		
Total		94	100,0		

Question 4. How many years have you been participating in Euroloppet Ski races?

Statistics

Years of participation in
the Euroloppet

N	Valid	90
	Missing	4

Years of participation in the Euroloppet

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 years	36	38,3	40,0		40,0
	3-5 years	17	18,1	18,9		58,9
	5-8 years	18	19,1	20,0		78,9
	over 8 years	19	20,2	21,1		100,0
	Total	90	95,7	100,0		
Missing	System	4	4,3			
Total		94	100,0			

5. What is your favourite ski length?

Statistics

Favourite Ski Length

N	Valid	89
	Missing	5

Favourite Ski Length

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	under 30km	29	30,9	32,6		32,6
	30-45 km	43	45,7	48,3		80,9
	45-60km	16	17,0	18,0		98,9
	over 60km	1	1,1	1,1		100,0
	Total	89	94,7	100,0		
Missing	System	5	5,3			
Total		94	100,0			

6.What is your favourite skiing style on Ski marathons?

Statistics**Favourite Ski Style**

N	Valid	89
	Missing	5

Favourite Ski Style

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Free Style	40	42,6	44,9		44,9
	Classic Style	49	52,1	55,1		100,0
	Total	89	94,7	100,0		
Missing	System	5	5,3			
Total		94	100,0			

7. How many races do you take part in one season?

Statistics

Number of Races in one
season

N	Valid	91
	Missing	3

Number of Races in one season

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	23	24,5	25,3		25,3
	2	29	30,9	31,9		57,1
	3	25	26,6	27,5		84,6
	4	5	5,3	5,5		90,1
	5	3	3,2	3,3		93,4
	over 5	6	6,4	6,6		100,0
	Total	91	96,8	100,0		
Missing	System	3	3,2			
Total		94	100,0			

8. Do you take part in Euroloppet races in foreign countries?

Statistics

Races in Foregin Countries

N	Valid	88
	Missing	6

Races in Foregin Countries

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	73	77,7	83,0		83,0
	No	15	16,0	17,0		100,0
	Total	88	93,6	100,0		
Missing	System	6	6,4			

Races in Foregin Countries

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	73	77,7	83,0		83,0
	No	15	16,0	17,0		100,0
	Total	88	93,6	100,0		
Missing	System	6	6,4			
Total		94	100,0			

9. If you take part in Euroloppet races in foreign countries, do you use travel agents?

Statistics

Use of Travel Agencies to
foreign races

N	Valid	84
	Missing	10

Use of Travel Agencies to foreign races

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	10	10,6	11,9		11,9
	No	74	78,7	88,1		100,0
	Total	84	89,4	100,0		
Missing	System	10	10,6			
Total		94	100,0			

10. Have you ever participated Lapponia Hiihto in Finland?

Statistics

Participation in Lapponia
Hiihto

N	Valid	91
	Missing	3

Participation in Lapponia Hiihto

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	17,0	17,6	17,6
	No	75	79,8	82,4	100,0
	Total	91	96,8	100,0	
Missing	System	3	3,2		
Total		94	100,0		

11. If yes, how did you experience travelling to Lapponia Hiihto?

Statistics

Travel experiences in Lapponia Hiihto

N	Valid	16
	Missing	78

Travel experiences in Lapponia Hiihto

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	easy	10	10,6	62,5	62,5
	quite easy	6	6,4	37,5	100,0
	Total	16	17,0	100,0	
Missing	System	78	83,0		
Total		94	100,0		

12. Have you ever participated Vuokatti Hiihto in Finland (Euroloppet race 2003-2004)?

Statistics

Participation in Vuokatti

Hiihto 2003_2004

N	Valid	84
	Missing	10

Participation in Vuokatti Hiihto 2003_2004

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	84	89,4	100,0	100,0
Missing System	10	10,6		
Total	94	100,0		

13. Would you be interested to take part in Vuokatti Hiihto if it was a Euroloppet race again?

Statistics

Future Interest in Vuokatti

Hiihto

N	Valid	88
	Missing	6

Future Interest in Vuokatti Hiihto

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	41	43,6	46,6	46,6
No	13	13,8	14,8	61,4
Maybe	34	36,2	38,6	100,0
Total	88	93,6	100,0	
Missing System	6	6,4		
Total	94	100,0		

14. If yes or maybe, would you be interested to take part in both Vuokatti Hiihto and Lapponia Hiihto if there were within one week from each other?

Statistics

Willingness in participating
in both Vuokatti and Lap-
ponia Hiihto within one
week

N	Valid	81
	Missing	13

**Willingness in participating in both Vuokatti and Lapponia Hiihto
within one week interval from each other**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	38	40,4	46,9	46,9
	No	14	14,9	17,3	64,2
	Maybe	29	30,9	35,8	100,0
	Total	81	86,2	100,0	
Missing	System	13	13,8		
Total		94	100,0		

15. Would you be interested to take part in new ski marathon in Vuokatti, Finland if it was held at the beginning of December (Start of the European ski marathon season)?

Statistics

Interest in participating in
new ski marathon in Vuo-
katti Hiihto at the begining
of December

N	Valid	87
	Missing	7

Interest in participating in new ski marathon in Vuokatti Hiihto at the beginning of December

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	19,1	20,7		20,7
	No	40	42,6	46,0		66,7
	Maybe	29	30,9	33,3		100,0
	Total	87	92,6	100,0		
Missing	System	7	7,4			
Total		94	100,0			

16. If yes, what would be the most suitable skiing length for the race (it would be skied on classic style at the 10 km first snow track. For more than 10km, there will be multiple skiing on same track)?

Statistics

Favourite Ski Length in
New December Marathon

N	Valid	56
	Missing	38

Favourite Ski Length in New December Marathon

		Frequency	Percent	Valid cent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	under 40 km	43	45,7	76,8		76,8
	40-50 km	12	12,8	21,4		98,2
	over 50 km	1	1,1	1,8		100,0
	Total	56	59,6	100,0		
Missing	System	38	40,4			
Total		94	100,0			

17. What is the major reason why you have never took part in any ski marathons in Finland or would not also be interested to participate in any future?

Statistics

Reason for not participating in any ski marathon in Finland now and in future

N	Valid	70
	Missing	24

Reason for not participating in any ski marathon in Finland now and in future

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	i'm not interested	2	2,1	2,9	2,9
	it is expensive	55	58,5	78,6	81,4
	other	13	13,8	18,6	100,0
	Total	70	74,5	100,0	
Missing	System	24	25,5		
Total		94	100,0		